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PRELIMINARY THESES on ARTWORK in SUPPORT of the PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE

by Lucas

Our art must clearly express our class stand—the proletarian stand. Our art in support of the Resistance should enunciate our support on the basis of our revolutionary socialist ideology, and not on the basis of any type of conditional support, or as a “means to reach an end.” This, I think, will be a direct byproduct of the integration of the masses into our artwork. Just as Mao liberated philosophy from the confines of the professors’ lecterns, we, too, must liberate artwork from the confines of the museums and postmodernist “art.”

We should draw parallels between struggles for liberation in the “united states” (for example, our rich history of workers’ strikes and struggles, and especially the actions of national liberation groups like the Black Liberation Army), to drive home the central point that should guide all of our cultural work with regards to Palestine: It is right to rebel.

Art inspires thought. Thought, in turn inspires action. Our artwork should always be guided by these principles. If we can spread support for the Resistance, we will have done one of our many jobs as revolutionaries and as Communists.

At this moment, revolutionaries in the “united states” are at a critical juncture. Since October 7, 2023, the Palestinian people, from the workers to the peasantry to the intellectuals and teachers to the militants and soldiers to the lower, progressive stratum of the national bourgeoisie, have once again risen up in a new great wave of revolutionary combat and resistance to zionism, imperialism, and settler-colonialism.

The response of revolutionaries in the “united states” has generally been one of militant solidarity and righteous internationalism in support of our Palestinian brothers and sisters. Just one month ago, some twenty revolutionaries completely besieged the Golden Gate Bridge in the San Francisco Bay Area and shut down all traffic for nearly an hour, carrying a banner in condemnation of the zionist entity and the complicity of the “united states” government in arming, enabling, and supporting their ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people. Similar actions have occurred several times since then in other cities.

There have been massive mobilizations in almost every major amerikan city in support of the Resistance and their valiant campaign. In November of last year, in the state of Washington, activists even frustrated the disembarkation of a ship laden with weapons for the zionist entity. Clearly, our job is not over, and these actions provide us with a wealth of practical examples of how to resist.

Nevertheless, resistance is not just limited to the streets, though it must be made clear that these concrete, practical, militant actions are the principal aspect. Mao says in his 1942,

“In our struggle for the liberation of the Chinese people, there are various fronts, among which there are the fronts of the pen and of the gun, the cultural and the military fronts. To defeat the enemy, we must rely primarily on the army with guns, but this is not enough; we must also have a cultural army, which is absolutely indispensable for uniting our own ranks and defeating the enemy.”

While the gun is principal, it is useless without the pen. As Lenin points out in his 1901 work, *What Is To Be Done?*:

“Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement.”

Thus, revolutionary artists and writers in the “united states” are, therefore, assigned a special task—insofar as the Palestinian National Resistance is concerned. We must penetrate the social spheres of bourgeois culture, art, and literature and install and develop solidarity with the Resistance. Mao goes on to further state that:

“Our aim is to ensure that revolutionary literature and art follow the correct path of development and provide better help to other revolutionary work in facilitating the overthrow of our national enemy and the accomplishment of the task of national liberation.”

This axiom must also guide the entirety of our work.

Our immediate goal is to generate militant support for the

decentralization.

4) Collaboration. We cannot rely on one single artist or even a small group of artists to do all of this. We must place revolutionary art in the hands of the people so that they can all make art in support of the Resistance whenever and wherever it is needed. We must steel them in class struggle so that they are able to fearlessly defend the Resistance through artwork. We should teach our skills to a broad stratum of people sympathetic to our cause, not just the workers, but progressive intellectuals also.

5) Variety. Our art should not be limited solely to “traditional” forms like the canvas and the notebook. For the widest accessibility and fluidity, we should make some of our art digitally if we have access to the materials. This is especially helpful to make lots of copies of artwork at once.

Through our art, we should address the intersection of the Palestinian struggle with other national liberation struggles, both historical and contemporary. For example, the Zionist entity infamously provided weapons to the Salvadoran government during their genocide of the indigenous Maya peoples. We should learn about this and depict solidarity between the Salvadoran and Palestinian peoples, and moreover, connect this solidarity to more broad Latin American solidarity with Palestine. If our artists and cultural workers themselves belong to these marginalized and oppressed communities, we would do well to have them speak with their own people and integrate them into the struggle on equal terms as artists.

Tactically, these slogans and art pieces should have five fundamental characteristics:

1) Clarity. The situation must be presented in a clear, explicit, and uncomplicated fashion. We should avoid using over-complicated terminology, and avoid stereotyped Party writing.

2) Frugality. We cannot afford to spend thousands, or even hundreds of dollars on equipment to make our art as ornate as possible. The message is what is critical here, not necessarily the artistic skill. This also implies developing ways to spread our message using the cheap means we already have at our disposal.

3) Speed. The logistics of spreading slogans and artwork should be oriented primarily around fluidity of application. We should be able to quickly make this art, apply it, and move on to another location as soon as possible, all under the utmost clandestinity. This is guerrilla artwork. In more stationary settings, i.e., when we are not on the move in the middle of a demonstration or protest, we should engage with the viewers of our artwork and ask them for their opinions on the Palestinian struggle. If they are decidedly zionist, we should condemn them and turn them away. If they are on the fence we should try to convince them. If they support Palestine, we should integrate them into our activities and apply to them the strategy of the United Front. There is no need to spend several hours on one piece, when that time could be dedicated to making five or six pieces. Determining which piece of artwork should be placed where requires a great degree of tactical

Resistance in the sphere of culture. To do this, our artwork mustn't serve as a simple mirror that reflects the current situation, but a hammer—a tool with which to change the situation—to alter the correlation of forces in the cultural sphere in favor of the Resistance.

Our goal is not necessarily to generate only sympathy for the Palestinian people, but also support for their liberators: the Resistance. Depicting the crimes of the zionist entity is useless without also depicting that which combats these crimes and delivers justice in response: the Resistance. Through our art, we must depict both the glories and victories of the Resistance and the crimes of the zionist entity, to make it clearly known that it is the Resistance, and solely they, who can protect the Palestinian people with whom the workers in their millions sympathize.

We should disrupt. Revolutionary art itself is disruptive to bourgeois culture. Our goal is to frustrate all culture that is sympathetic to zionism and to the zionist entity through the creation of a counterculture that respects, exalts, and supports the Resistance at every turn. Extol the martyrs, make their names known far and wide. Make it clear that the Resistance has a million eyes and a million ears. This will strike great fear into the hearts of the zionists, their sympathizers, and their allies; when they cannot walk down the street without seeing the faces of the martyrs painted onto walls and street signs, when they cannot go about their daily lives without looking into the eyes of those who have given their lives to frustrate the zionists' genocidal plans. Make the zionists understand through our art that they are neither welcome nor safe in our country. Our art should threaten the zionists

and have them looking over their shoulders.

Our art must unapologetically uphold and depict armed struggle as the sole means with which the Palestinians may grasp liberation. Motifs such as the rifle and the sword must be employed in opposition to the dove and the olive branch. We must make it clear that the latter two are the results of the former two, and keep in mind the words of Chairman Mao in *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*.

“We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun, it is necessary to take up the gun... War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not too distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war...”

We should understand that the bourgeoisie will not permit the publication and dissemination of our artwork in support of the Resistance. Nor should we desire such a thing. Chairman Gonzalo said in *Directivas de Mayo para Lima Metropolitana*:

“The walls are the pages whereon the people express their ideas, since they have nowhere else to write, neither radio, nor TV, nor newspapers. This is because the entire media is in the hands of the exploiters. When have they allowed the poor to express themselves? The only ones they allow to speak in the media are the opportunists, the revisionists, the

pastiches, the lackeys, the workers' aristocracy, and the bogus leaders of the masses...”

We have nothing but scorn for the cultural organs of the bourgeoisie. They are completely and totally antagonistic to our goals. We must set our art in stark opposition to the ramblings of these bourgeois media outlets. We must draw a clear line of demarcation between our art and culture, and theirs, which is sympathetic to zionism. We should explain to the people that they cannot and should not trust bourgeois media to give an accurate, pro-Palestinian account of the situation.

We should recall what happened with media like the *New York Times* earlier in November of last year, when the bogus story about the several dozen infants allegedly executed by Hamas came out. Where is the proof? It is non-existent. We should use this instance and others like it to make the people understand that the media represents neither themselves, nor the working, struggling masses of Palestine.

Most importantly, we must integrate the masses directly into the artistic struggle. Since the masses of Palestine are fighting there, it must be our masses who fight here. We must teach our masses the slogans that we use, and teach them how to spread them. We cannot afford to let this responsibility slip through our fingers. We cannot allow, even for a moment, the bourgeoisie to wrest control of our artistic power. We must hold meetings of revolutionary artists drafted from amongst the masses to formulate a direct and unified list of slogans and drawings to make.